

Sermon #6

"It's Time to Move"

Acts 8

Introduction: In 1874, some folks in Swan Quarter, North Carolina decided to build a new gathering place for their growing congregation. They felt impressed to place the building on a specific lot, prime property in the main area of town owned by a man named Samuel Slader.

Unfortunately, when they approached Mr. Slader, he adamantly refused to sell them the property. So they reluctantly opted for a different location. Then right before their dedication ceremony, the miracle happened:

A hurricane came up the coast and about 5 feet of water surged through the area. The historical account, verified on the Snopes website, reads:

"During September 16-17, 1876, on the eve of the edifice's dedication, a hurricane blew through the area. Pamlico Sound engulfed Swan Quarter, sweeping the sanctuary off its foundation. A Providence United brochure tells what happened: A miracle was happening — the church was floating down the road. The church 'moved by the hand of God.' It went straight down the road to a corner and bumped into a general store owned by George V. Credle. The corner is now Oyster Creek Road and U.S. 264 Business.

'Then a curious thing happened! The building took a sharp right turn and headed down the road for about two blocks until it reached the corner of what is now Church Street. Then it moved slightly off its

straight-line course, took another turn to the left, crossed the Carawan Canal directly in front of the place where people desired the church to be, and settled exactly in the center of the Sam Sadler property, the site which had been refused.' . . . Before it settled, witnesses said it miraculously rotated around to face the street and there it would stay!"

Needless to say, Mr. Sadler changed his mind and sold them the property—property the church founders felt God wanted them to have at the start.

The church became known as "the church moved by the Hand of God."

The House of God had been MOVED by the Hand of God!

In Acts 8 the church is about to be MOVED by the Hand of God too! The time had come for the gospel to be taken beyond the city limits of Jerusalem.

Warren Wiersbe said, "The "salt" was now leaving the 'Jerusalem saltshaker' to be spread over Judea and Samaria, just as the Lord had commanded."

The command of Acts 1: 8 was for the disciples to be "**witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**"

Acts 1: 8 outlines the **geographical** reach of the gospel in the book of Acts. It would go from Jerusalem (chaps. 1-7) to Judea and Samaria (chaps. 8-9), and then to the Gentiles, or the uttermost part of the earth (chaps. 10-28).

Stephen's death was the climax of the disciples' ministry at Jerusalem. After his death, the door was opened for the gospel to travel to other destinations. The gospel travels begin in Acts 8 because **it was time to move.**

Outline

1. The Church of God Moves Out!

A) *An Unorthodox Method*

B) *An Unchanged Message*

2. The Enemy of God Moves In!

A) *Their Focus was Distracted*

B) *Their Faith was Determined*

3. The Grace of God Moves On!

A) *Salvation Demanded*

1) By the Sinner

2) Through the Scripture

a) Suffering Christ

b) Silent Christ

c) Slaughtered Christ

B) *Salvation Delivered*

C) *Salvation Demonstrated*